

Title:

Addicted To Oil? You Bet Your Lipstick

Word Count:

371

Summary:

People generally think of oil products as the stuff that powers cars, truck, SUVs, plane and trains. However, transportation accounts for only about half of the petroleum we use. What we rarely think of is all the other products in which oil is a key ingredient, such as lipstick.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

In his State of the Union speech earlier this year, President Bush said America is "addicted to oil." Correct, but hardly a surprise.

We generally think of oil products as the stuff that powers cars, trucks, SUVs, planes and trains. However, transportation accounts for only about half of the petroleum we use.

What we rarely think of is all the other products in which oil is a key ingredient, such as lipstick. Petrochemicals are also used in the aspirin that relieves headaches and prevents heart attacks, the crayons our kids use -even diapers, DVDs, cameras, bandages, balloons and golf balls.

Three-dollar gasoline is one thing, but consider what our lives would be like without deodorant, perfume or toothpaste (yuck). Can you imagine no vitamins, antiseptic, house paint, syringes, pacemakers, baby strollers, garbage bags, candles or panty hose? (Well, actually, I could do without panty hose.)

But you get my point. Petroleum is used much more in our daily lives than in just filling our gas tanks.

Actually, we're addicted to "foreign" oil. Today we import about 60 percent of our oil and petroleum products-much of it from unfriendly countries such as Venezuela.

There are other options. America has ample reserves of oil and gas but much of

it is locked on federal lands. Only Congress can vote to open these lands to exploration. This June, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act to allow exploration in the deep waters off our coasts, while giving states the authority to determine how close exploration is allowed. The Senate, however, is waffling on the terms of the bill.

In May, the U.S. House voted to open just 2,000 coastal acres of the 19 million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil exploration. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that this area could produce enough oil to supply us with 1.5 million barrels of oil per day lasting 25 years at a minimum. That's enough to replace 30 years of imports from Saudi Arabia-and plenty of lipstick.

The U.S. Senate, however, hasn't voted for a stand-alone bill to open ANWR since 1995, when President Clinton vetoed it.

Being "price gouged" on sunscreen? Thank the U.S. Senate for keeping us addicted to foreign oil.